

**Remarks/Arguments:**

The election of Group I, claims 1-26 is hereby affirmed.

The disclosure and claims have been objected to. Language in each has been appropriately amended. Withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-14, 17-18, 23 and 26 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by JP 2000-218130. It is respectfully submitted, however, that these claims are now patentable over the art of record for the reasons set forth below.

Applicants' invention, as recited by claim 1 (amended) includes a feature which is neither disclosed nor suggested by the art of record, namely:

... a plurality of thin plates ...

... a plurality of U-shaped catalyst heaters are disposed piercing through said pluralities of thin plates ...

This is supported by the originally filed application at page 11, lines 8-15. This is also illustrated in Applicants' Figure 6.

The prior art reference does not disclose a U-shaped catalyst heater. JP 2000-218130 discloses heater 8. Heater 8 is not U-shaped.

Claims 1-2, 5-9, 13-19, 24 and 26 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 05-154348 in view of U.S. 5,790,934. The '348 application does not disclose U-shaped heaters piercing through thin plates. This feature is also lacking from the '934 patent.

As explained in Applicants' specification at page 22, line 22, through page 23, line 3, since a plurality of catalyst heaters 24 are disposed, each of the metal sheets

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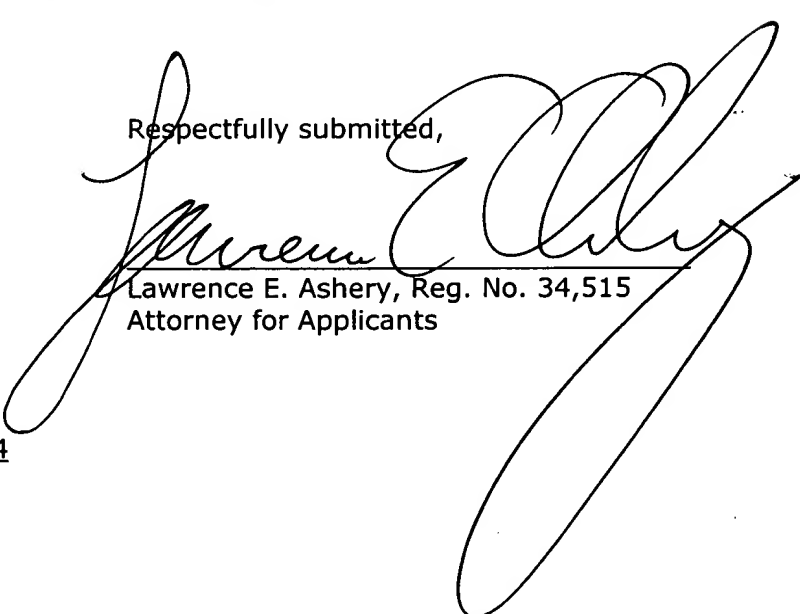
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can be enlarged (with regards to their outer diameter). As a result, the surface area of fins 2 can be further increased. When the exhaust gas passes through fins 2, the exhaust gas comes in contact with the catalyst in the larger area. As a result, a desirable exhaust gas purifying capacity is obtained. As the above feature is neither disclosed nor suggested by the art of record, Applicants' claims are patentable over the art or record.

The Official Action includes additional rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of Applicants' pending claims. These claims, however, are patentable by virtue of their dependency on allowable independent claims. Thus, these claims are also allowable.

In view of the amendments and arguments set forth above, the above-identified application is in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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